

it was enchanting to meet you by thenewromantics

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: F/M, Soulmate AU, a good ol' classic soulmate au, also plenty of fun party stuff that i got way more into writing then i originally meant to, it's all pretty self explanatory tbh, which really isn't THAT much of an au bc let's face it mike & el are soulmates in canon

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Summary:

the mark appears the day after mike's twelfth birthday, and on november seventh, the day after his best friend disappears in the middle of the woods, it burns.

aka another soulmate au that no one asked for.

it was enchanting to meet you

Author's Note:

ok so this is my first mike/eleven fanfic and i'm super nervous about it, i haven't written fic in months so i'm a little rusty but i hope this isn't too bad???? all i know is that it originally was only supposed to be a short lil 2k word ficlet and it turned into a 7k word thing so, enjoy!!

title comes from the taylor swift song 'enchanted' which is one of my all time favs of hers, so if you feel so inclined, feel free to listen to it while reading this

The mark appears the day after his twelfth birthday.

He doesn't notice it at first, his eyes still foggy with sleep when he spots it. Barely registering it, he absentmindedly brushed the mark, assuming it was just a smudge that had appeared overnight, or maybe was left over from the day before, he paid no mind to it as he pulled his shirt over his head, the mark covered by the soft fabric of his long sleeved polo.

The mark is completely forgotten by the time Mike is sitting at the breakfast table, his mom dishing out eggs and bacon for him and his sisters and his dad hidden behind his newspaper, the soft noise of that day's weather playing from the living room television. It's almost amazing how, average, the whole thing is. Him and Nancy bicker as they usually do and their father scolds them for their language, and thirty minutes later their mother hurries them out the door.

Years later, Mike will reflect on completely menial the whole day was. How he just went to school and didn't pay any mind to the

curve his life was starting to take. How it took him nearly three days to properly notice the mark on his arm and what it symbolized.

It was a Saturday when Mike finally took real notice to the now permanent blemish on his skin.

He was rolling up his sleeves as got to a particularly riveting part in the campaign that he had spent a week planning, Dustin was shoving trail mix into his mouth in anticipation and Will looked like he was going to pass out he was so on edge. Lucas, however, was paying significantly less attention to the campaign, complaining of a headache and sore throat, and was the one who noticed the mark on Mike's forearm.

"And then..." Mike pauses, allowing the anticipation to hang in the air, Dustin and Will both leaning forward in their chairs.

"Dude, what the hell is that?" Lucas' voice broke through the silence, his hand reaching out and wrapping itself around Mike's wrist.

Will slumped back in seat, the moment gone, taking a deep breath while Dustin rolled his eyes and looked like he wanted to punch Lucas in the face for interrupting. Mike was just confused, his eyebrows knitting together as he looked to where Lucas' hand was grabbing him.

"What's what?"

“This, on your wrist.” Lucas pointing out, his thumb brushing over the mark.

Dustin and Will both leaned forward in their seats, both of them forgoing their earlier annoyance at the interruption, their curiosity peaked. Lucas pulled Mike’s arm towards the center of the table, bringing it into the dim overhead light of the Wheeler basement.

“Is that a...?” Will asked, his eyebrows disappearing into his hair as he got a good look at the mark.

“Soulmate mark.” Dustin finished, a satisfied smirk falling onto his face. Mike paled, pulling his arm away from Lucas’ and examining the mark for himself. Will and Lucas were now sporting equally as satisfied smirks, almost like they were thrilled that they got to be here for the discovery of it.

There, as clear as day on Mike’s right wrist was the word ‘no’ the word small, but clear. It was settled right below his pulse point, the letters curving over the stretch of his skin. Grazing the mark lightly with his finger, Mike gulped as the mark moved with the pull of his skin, not peeling as he picked at his slightly with his fingernail.

“Dude.” Dustin breathed lightly, snapping Mike from his daze and reminding him that all of his friends were still sitting around the table watching him. “Do you know what this means?”

That he did. He knew exactly what it meant.

It meant that he was one of the few people in the world who had a soulmate.

They had all learned the story back in fourth grade. About how the first word that your soulmate ever speaks to you appears on your forearm when you turn the age that you are when you meet them for the first time and how the mark burns when they speak them. However, he also knew that this wasn't a normal occurrence. In fact, the whole story had been taught to them as a myth, a story, something that supposedly had happened to a couple people in the history of the world, but there wasn't any scientific evidence or enough occurrences in the world to prove that it actually happened.

"What do you think hers says?" Dustin asked, his voice gleeful and bright. "Who do you think it is? Do you think it's a girl at school? There are a bunch of girls at school that you've never spoken to before, do you think one of them is your soulmate?"

Lucas rolled his eyes as Dustin rambled off question after question, clearly resisting the urge to reach across the table and swat his trademark hat clean off his head. Dustin hardly noticed though, his eyes wide as he looked at Mike, desperate for any kind of answer. Unfortunately for them though, Mike was just as confused as they were.

"Doesn't it have to be someone he hasn't met yet?" Will questioned, drawing his eyebrows together.

"No, it's the first word that his soulmate speaks to him, doesn't matter how long they've known each other, at least that's how I

remember the story. And, objectively, I have the best memory of anyone sitting at this table, so chances are, I'm right."

"Dustin, for the love of God, please shut the hell up." Lucas groaned, putting his head in his hands.

"Excuse me Lucas, I'm just trying to help. I'm sure now that Mike knows he has a soulmate out there, he wants to find her. Don't you want Mike to be happy, jeez." Mike could see Lucas open his mouth, no doubt to fire back his own response, which would probably lead to an argument that he certainly wasn't in the mood to listen to.

"Both of you please stop." Mike interrupted. "As much as I appreciate you guys trying to help, I don't know anything, so bickering about the whole thing isn't gonna help much." Dustin and Lucas have the decency to look a little ashamed of their actions, but it's Will who replies.

"I think it's really cool that you have a soulmate." He says in a soft voice, shrugging his shoulders slightly. "But, if you don't want us to talk about it, or tell us anything about it, then we totally understand, right guys?"

Dustin and Lucas both looked down at the table, Dustin running his finger along the edge of the game board, while Lucas began rolling his game piece between his fingers before placing it back on the board.

"Right."

“Yeah, totally. Sorry.”

Mike merely nods, desperate to change the subject and get back into the game. He wasn't really sure what to make the whole thing, his heart clenching in his chest uncomfortable when he thought about it for more than five seconds at a time and he was itching for his friends to drop it so he could focus on something else.

The four were silent as they readjusted around the table, Lucas sitting up from his slouched position, his previous headache seemingly forgotten. Will started to get that look on his face that he got when things were about to happen in the game. Even though Mike was the dungeon master, Will seemed to be able to sense when something major was about to happen. Dustin, however, while silent, didn't look like he was one hundred percent back in game mood.

“Wait since your tattoo says no, do you think the first thing that's going to happen is that she turns you down when you ask her out? That's rough, dude.”

“Dustin.”

“Dude!”

“Shut up, please.”

“Yeah, okay, that was a low blow. Sorry.”

As spring began to shift into summer, the tattoo on Mike's wrist became a thing that just sat in the back of his mind. He noticed it sometimes, and would press his fingers against it, to remind himself that yes it was definitely real and not going away anytime soon. But, he found that if he focused on it for too long, he would become itchy all over his body.

It was uncomfortable to say the least.

He still hadn't told anyone else about it, hell, he probably wouldn't even told the guys if they hadn't seen it. Dustin liked to rib him about it when they were sitting around the lunch table and Lucas raised his eyebrows nearly every day when Mike showed up to school in a long sleeve shirts, even as the temperatures began to raise to summer like heights.

It was just that, Mike already felt weird enough at school. Him and his friends constantly being used as punching bags by Troy and the other bullies, he didn't really want to give anyone more ammunition to make him feel like an outsider. Besides, it's not like it was anyone else's business.

He definitely did not want to tell his parents.

His mom would probably get really excited and overly invested in the

whole thing. Mike knew that she sometimes worried that he was never going to find *anyone* interested in him. It wasn't like his parents were particularly subtle when they talked about how his passion for D and D and comic books weren't helping him socially. So, no doubt, if his mom found out that the universe had perfectly aligned him with another human being, she would do everything in her Karen Wheeler power to help him find her, which he was just not ready for.

Nancy would no doubt tease him mercilessly. That was just in the nature of their relationship to begin with, but Nancy always loved poking fun at him whenever she found out that he was talking to a girl. Last year when he had mentioned that he had to work with Shelby Thompson on a history project at the dinner table, she had teased him about it for weeks. No, telling Nancy was definitely off the table. Especially because he also thought she might be a little jealous, she had always loved the soulmate myth and he knew when she was younger she had always wished she would get one.

And honestly, he would rather die than mention anything like this to his father.

He could always tell Holly, but then again he didn't know if his three year old sister was the person he wanted to trust with this information.

Summer hit Hawkins, Indiana that year with gusto, the temperatures never getting much lower than the high seventies and clouds hardly ever tainting the blue skies. It became increasingly harder for Mike to cover up his mark with long sleeves on a day to day basis. Luckily, it was easy enough for him to leave the mark free around his friends, their teasing still present, but less frequent than in the immediate aftermath of the discover.

Hiding it from his parents, however, was a monster all on it's own.

During the day he would disappear from the house with his friends before either of his parents could bat an eyelash, always skipping breakfast and returning long after his mother and father have sat down to eat. Sure, about a month into summer vacation and he was seriously missing his mom's cooking (not so much the awkward dinner conversations, but his mom's cooking usually made up for it), but he was pretty desperate to keep his secret.

And it worked, at least for a while. About halfway into July his mom had it, turns out that both Mike and Nancy were skipping out on dinner almost every night, Mike staying out with his friends, running around in the woods and hanging out at Castle Byers until the sun went down and Nancy spending almost every night at Barb's house, so she started forcing them to come home for dinner at least three days a week.

"I have no idea if you two are even eating, so I need to have some peace of mind and know that at least a couple days a week you are eating something besides pizza and soda." She had said one evening when Nancy and Mike had both slipped in well after dinner.

Nancy had looked like she wanted to argue, something no doubt about how she was a teenager and it was embarrassing to have to leave her friends just so she could come home for dinner, but their mom had cut any argument off with a simple look. Mike simply nodded, before taking off up the stairs and into his room.

The rule was enforced the next day and was quite possibly the most

awkward meal the Wheeler family has ever had, which was saying something. It also happened to be the hottest day of the summer so far, so Mike spent the entire meal with his right arm under the table, eating his dinner exclusively with his left hand.

“Michael, why are you eating with your left hand? You’re spilling food all over the table.” His mom finally questioned after he had knocked a considerably large spoonful of peas into his lap and onto the table.

“Uhh...just an bet my friends and I are doing.” He could see the look Nancy was giving him out of the corner of his eye, but refused to meet her glance. One look at her and the whole lie would come crashing down. “We’re trying to see who can do the most everyday activities with their non dominant hand, so I’m doing everything with my left hand.”

He has to admit that he pats himself on the back a little bit for that lie. It definitely doesn’t sound like something out of the realm of possibility when it comes to the bets that him and his friends would do, it would one hundred percent be something Dustin would come up with, but still.

“Well, your friends aren’t here right now Michael, and I doubt any of them will know if you ate your dinner with your right hand instead of your left hand.” His mom says, using that familiar tone, the *I’m not arguing with you anymore on this, so either you can listen to me or be punished* tone.

“But mom, we have to make sure all of our information is accurate, we all promised that we would do everything with our left hands. I can’t break a promise.”

That seems to get his mom to listen to him, and he smiles in relief when she seems to give up arguing. She merely sighs and goes back to her own meal. Nancy is still eyeing him weirdly, but he ignores her too, focusing instead on the weird tingle that had spread across his skin when he had mentioned never breaking a promise. At first he thought it was maybe just a chill, but the air is still outside, and the tingle seemed to originate from the mark.

He ultimately shakes it off, desperate to finish his dinner and get away from the table. He rebuffs his mom's offer of desert, not really feeling like dripping ice cream all over her fancy table cloth and getting an ear full of a lecture after the fact.

However, he doesn't make it very far once departing the dinner table, as Nancy is hot on his heels, obviously still weirded out by his actions during dinner.

"What?" Mike all but growls, spinning around to look at her when he's in the doorway of his bedroom. She recoils slightly, taking a small step back but hardly backs down, only crossing her arms to glare at him.

"Geez, I'm just wondering what the hell has gotten into you. You're acting weirder than usual."

"Well, I appreciate the observation, but nothing's going on. Like I said, my friends and I are doing an experiment. Didn't think it would be this much of a conversation starter." Mike notes, raising one eyebrow. He turns to go into his room, desperate to end the conversation, only Nancy reaches out and grabs him by the wrist,

causing his blood to run cold.

“Mike, wait -,” she pauses, and Mike can practically himself go still under her touch. He doesn’t turn, not wanting to see her face, feeling far too embarrassed and flustered. “Have you been drawing on yourself or something? Is that why you didn’t want mom to see your arm? She does get really weird about that kind of stuff.”

Mike didn’t realize just how much breath he was holding in until he lets out a sigh of relief, turning slightly to give her an embarrassed smile.

“Yeah, Dustin and Lucas were writing things on their arms in permanent marker and I ended up getting hit with some of it.” He easily lies, shaking his head. “I knew mom would be pissed at me, so I lied about the experiment thing, her and dad usually check out whenever I bring up science.”

Nancy hummed, clearly only half listening as she continued to inspect the mark on his wrist. He could hear his blood pounding, loudly, in his ears, the longer she looked at it, the more anxious he was becoming that she would realize what it really was.

“Wait, this doesn’t look like it was written in marker, or pen, or written in anything for that matter.” Her eyebrows were crinkled together and Mike could feel beads of sweat forming in his hairline. “This looks like a tattoo...”

He yanked his arm from his sister’s hands, pulling it into his body. “It’s not a tattoo, Nancy.”

“Yeah, of course it isn’t. It’s a soulmate mark!” She exclaimed, trying to grab his arm again. He resisted, taking a step into his room and folding his arms across his chest.

“Shut up! I don’t want mom and dad to hear, just leave it alone.” Nancy nodded, seemingly understanding why he didn’t want their parents hearing. “It’s not that big a deal.”

“Not a big deal? Of course it’s a big deal, Mike.”

Mike scoffed, desperate to drop the conversation. He was already uncomfortable enough with someone else knowing, especially that someone being his older sister, the last thing he wanted to do was actually talk about it.

“Ok fine, maybe it is. But I don’t want to talk about it alright, so can we just drop it.” He sighed, dropping his arms from their cross position across his chest, his left index finger absentmindedly scratching at the mark. “Sorry, I just don’t wanna make a big deal about it so can you just not say anything about it to anyone?”

Mike hardly ever pleads with his sister for anything. Hell, he hardly ever has any reason to, but now he’s willing to do pretty much anything to keep her from revealing his secret to anyone.

Nancy considers his words for a second, before sighing and nodding. “Yeah, Mike. I won’t tell anyone. On one condition though.” He groans. He should have seen that one coming.

“What?”

Her entire face lights up, Mike is pretty sure she could light their Christmas tree next year. That does little to calm the nerves that are bundling in knots in the pit of his stomach.

“You have to tell me when you meet her.”

Mike’s pretty sure he lets out an audible sigh of relief, not because he wants his older sister to be privy to his private life, but because he was pretty sure she was going to ask him to do something for her.

“Fine, yeah. Whatever.” As non committable and bored as Mike’s response is, it seems to be enough for Nancy as she smiles and nods at him before retreating from his doorway into the direction of her own room.

Mike reads that as the end of the conversation and directs his attention elsewhere before his sister’s voice calls out to him again.

“Hey, Mike.”

“Yeah?”

There’s a moment between them, one that rarely occurs between

them, where Nancy smiles at him and he feels a weird affection for his older sister that always kind of makes him want to throw up after he experiences it.

“I’m happy for you.”

She disappears before he can formulate any kind of response, but he still smiles nevertheless.

Sometimes when he lays awake at night, he thinks about what his soulmate might be doing.

He tries to avoid the subject of *who* his soulmate might be, or what they look like, mainly just because then he gets overwhelmed with pictures and images and weird sensations that cause him to feel like he needs to stick his head out his window to calm down.

So, as summer begins to bleed into early fall, Mike spends night after night staring at the mark on his skin and just, wondering. He’s always prided himself on having an active imagination, it’s the reason he was unanimously voted as the dungeon master back in fifth grade when they started playing D and D, so his mind runs wild wondering what his soulmate might be doing.

He wonders if his soulmate is trying to find him. This thought tends to bring him a lot of guilt because, all things considered, he really hasn’t done anything to try to find his soulmate. Mainly because he would have no idea where to start, but it does make him feel like a pretty shitty soulmate to think that she, or he, might be out there

searching for him while he sits around and does nothing.

He hopes that's not the case, he doesn't want to feel like he's failing his soulmate before they've even met. But he's a twelve year old kid, it's not like he knows how to look for people, his soulmate would understand that, right?

Since that train of thought brings him almost as much anxiety as the big *who?* question, Mike typically just likes to imagine that his soulmate is doing the same thing that he is. Laying in bed, looking at the words on his or her wrist and hey, maybe they're thinking about him.

When that's the image that's flooding his brain, he finds that it's pretty easy to fall asleep with a smile on his face.

Things get interesting when school starts up again and a new girl joins their class at Hawkins Middle. Her name is Abigail and according to Dustin, she's the prettiest girl that's ever he's ever seen in his entire life, and he's convinced that she's Mike's soulmate.

Mike has never hoped that Dustin has been wrong more in his entire life. (That's a slight overreaction, Mike definitely wanted Dustin to be wrong more when he told them he was pretty sure they were all going to get radioactive poisoning after swimming in the lake the summer before sixth grade, but this time is definitely high up on the list.)

It's not that he doesn't think Abigail is pretty, it's just, if she was his soulmate, it would be a huge letdown. Mike wasn't exactly expecting fireworks to explode in the sky and for the world to tilt or anything, but when Mike sees her for the first time, nothing about him feels any different. His heart doesn't race, he doesn't get goosebumps. In fact, if Dustin hadn't pointed her out across the cafeteria, Mike wouldn't have even noticed her.

"You're just being negative, because you don't want to admit that one, I could be right, and two, that your soulmate could be sitting over there." Dustin retorts when Mike denies his initial claims that Abigail could be his soulmate.

"I'm not being negative, I really just don't think it's her." Mike replies with a sigh, resisting the urge to roll his eyes. "Besides, I figured you'd be happy about it considering you can't stop staring at you, now she's all yours."

Dustin pretends he doesn't hear Mike, shoveling a bite of mashed potatoes into his mouth.

"Mike's right, she was in my math class and I happened to sit next to her and I didn't see any kind of tattoo on her wrist." Will adds from Mike's side.

"It could have just been really small or something, we all know Mike stumbles through his words maybe the first thing he says to her "um" or something just as short and dumb."

Lucas snorts at that one, adding his first contribution to the

conversation, but doesn't add anything additional, too focused on the chocolate chip cookie in his hand.

"The mark on my wrist is literally the word "no" and it's perfectly visible, hell that's how you guys found out about it. If Will was sitting next to her and couldn't see a mark, it's probably because she doesn't have one."

At the mention of his own mark, all three of his friends glanced to his right wrist, which was adorned with the new calculator watch he had bought himself with a good chunk his summer allowance that he had saved. He had always kind of wanted one, and when he realized that school was starting again soon and it was still a little too warm in Hawkins to pull out long sleeve shirts and sweatshirts, he knew he needed something to cover the mark with.

"I hope you realize that none of this deters me from thinking that she is your soulmate. Just accept your fate, Michael. The pretty blonde girl with the most adorable blue eyes is the girl that you are destined to spend the rest of your life with."

Mike is pretty sure that Dustin actually sighs when talking about this girl, and he can see Lucas and Will exchange an amused glance, while Mike can only sigh and try and drop the conversation.

"I don't really understand why you want her to be my soulmate so badly consider you talk about her like you're in love with you. Besides, I really don't think that she is." Dustin opens his mouth, no doubt to argue but Mike doesn't let him. "And no, I'm not just saying that."

“Fine. Don’t believe me. But at least go up and talk to her, you won’t know for sure until you actually say something to her.”

Mike glances over to where Abigail is sitting and quickly shakes his head. Yeah, going over and talking to her is so not happening.

“I am not going over there and talking to her.”

Will and Lucas also look over to Abigail’s table and seem to understand Mike’s logic almost immediately, but Dustin, always determined to argue his way through situation, isn’t hearing it.

“Why? Scared I might be right?”

“No, she’s just sitting with Stacey and her annoying posse and I’m really not in the mood for getting laughed at right now.”

“Fine. But you have to talk to her by the end of the day.” Dustin counters, pointing his spoon at Mike, who only narrowly avoids getting splattered with chocolate pudding in the process. “Swear to me, Michael. You have to swear it.”

Mike knows that it’s nearly impossible to avoid swearing out of anything when Dustin is the one asking, he really only pulls out that big of a gun when it’s something he *really* cares about. Despite the fact that Mike knows he’s completely right in this case, he supposes it won’t hurt too much to humor Dustin’s theory.

“Alright, yeah, I swear it.”

And Dustin doesn't let him forget it either. He's on Mike's heels all day long, fortunately for Dustin (and somewhat unfortunately in this case for Mike), the two of them share all of the rest of their classes of the day together, so Dustin is able to follow Mike around for the rest of the day.

However, Dustin's wish doesn't come into fruition until the final period of the day, English, when they walk in and Abigail is sitting there. Her blonde hair, which was previously down the last time Mike saw her, now tied up into a ponytail, “*maybe she had gym class or something*” he thinks absentmindedly, not caring all that much one way or another.

What he does care about, though, is the strength in which Dustin's elbow is nailing itself into his ribs repeatedly when he sees that she too is in this class with them. Neither Lucas nor Will are here, the former in history and the latter in his art elective, and Mike can't help but curse them, *lucky bastards* .

“Dude, go ask if you can sit next to her.” Dustin stage whispers, really not all that quietly, moving out of the way as more kids come into the classroom. They're still standing near the doorway and quite a few of their classmates are glaring at them for standing in the way. “Even if she says no, which she very well might, that means she could be your soulmate.”

“First of all, do not say that word with other people around like this, I don't need anyone else knowing, and secondly, I don't want to sit

next to her, what if she says yes.”

“Then, Michael, she’s not your soulmate and tomorrow you and I can sit next to each other. Just do it, you swore you would and the party doesn’t break swears, so go.” Mike doesn’t have any opportunity to argue before Dustin quite literally pushes him in the direction of Abigail and Mike has to actively make sure he doesn’t run into any of the desks that Dustin hadn’t been accounting for.

He watches with a sigh as Dustin makes his way to the front and sits in a seat near the blackboard while Mike is forced to sit over by the window, a place he usually avoids as the light typically glares off the blackboard weirdly for him and makes it hard for him to see. But, Dustin’s right, he swore he would do this and party members don’t break swears.

The closer and closer he gets to her, the more nervous he becomes. He still doesn’t think she’s his soulmate or anything, but she’s still a girl and Mike Wheeler doesn’t talk to girls, especially ones he doesn’t know, hell, he barely even talks to girls he’s related to. So, he’s kind of out here in uncharted territory.

“Um, hi.” Mike manages to say when he’s standing right next to her. She looks surprised when she directs her attention to him, a small smile on her face. “Is anyone sitting here? I mean, do you mind if I sit here?”

She considers him for a moment, before letting out a small laugh. “No, go ahead. I’m Abigail, but you can call me Abby.”

Mike nods once he's taken his seat, not wanting to look too relieved. The mark on his wrist was as cool as ever and he's still as soulmateless as ever.

"I'm Mike." He replies, letting himself smile a little. Luckily, he doesn't have to worry too much about holding any kind of conversation with her, as the teacher makes a move to stand in front of the class and Mike isn't one to talk when the teacher is trying to get the attention of the class.

Mike can only flip Dustin off when he turns around halfway through the class.

As fall drags on, Mike starts to get worried.

It's not like he still doesn't have plenty of time, his birthday isn't until March, so he still has almost six whole months left to meet his soulmate, he's just anxious and anxiety leads to worry.

He still hasn't told anyone else, his sister keeping her promise to not tell their parents and with his watch, it's getting a lot easier to hide the mark both at home and at school. In fact, all things considered, things are going as well as they could. Which is another reason he's worried.

Basically, everything about having a soulmate makes him even more anxious than he already is on a day to day basis. Between worrying

that the whole thing might be some kind of fluke and he doesn't even have a soulmate (after he's gotten, so *used* to and almost, happy about the whole thing) and he's destined to end up alone and never have anyone love him, ever, and worrying that someone is going to find out, whether it be his parents or Troy fucking Harrington, he spends a lot of time worrying.

"Mike, you know everything's gonna be fine, right?" Will asks one day when Mike is particularly on edge. It's a few days after Halloween and the two of them are doing homework in Mike's basement.

"Do I give off the impression that I'm worried about something?" Mike asks, his pencil tapping loudly off the corner of his notebook. Will merely raises his eyebrows in response. "Fine, it's just weird, I don't even know what I'm so worried about."

"You're worried that the universe made a mistake and that you don't actually have a soulmate because you haven't met them yet and you're worried that someone is gonna find out you have one and you don't want anyone outside of us and Nancy to know." Will says, like it's the simplest thing in the world, barely looking up from the homework he was doing and Mike's jaw actually falls open.

"Are you a mind reader and you just never bothered to tell me?" Mike asks after a couple seconds once he gets over the shock that somehow Will seemed to know exactly what it was that was bothering him.

Will laughs softly, shaking his head. "I'm not a mind reader, Mike. I just observe people and you're pretty easy to read. Besides, you're one of my best friends, I like to think I know you pretty well."

Mike considers all this for a second before giving his friend a grateful smile. "You really think everything's gonna be alright?"

"Yeah, I really do." Will says, a small smile on his face. "Unlike Dustin and Lucas who seem to like that you have a soulmate just to tease you over it, I actually think it's really cool and I'm really happy that you have someone out there that's made for you, because you're a good guy and you deserve that."

Mike smiles and he's pretty sure that he's never been more grateful to have Will Byers as one of his best friends as he does right at this very moment.

"Thank, Will." Mike says, his voice uncharacteristic a little thick with emotion. "That really means a lot."

"Don't need to thank me for telling the truth." Will replies with a shrug, directing his attention back to his homework. "But, you're welcome."

The two share a small smile and Mike feels the worry melt away from him a little bit, Will was right, everything was going to be fine.

Except everything is totally not fine because three days later Will does missing and it sets Mike's entire world on an axis. When Will

doesn't show up at school it sets a panic into Mike that he's never felt before and he realizes he's never been more anxious than he is to go out and find his best friend.

Everything that day seems to drag on and the only thing on Mike's mind is going out and looking for Will, so when night finally comes and him, Lucas and Dustin prepare themselves for their journey, Mike's on edge and practically jumping around his basement.

"Mike, dude, calm down. We're gonna find him." Lucas says, throwing his flashlight into his backpack.

"Yeah, yeah. I know. I know. I feel like something else is going to happen while we're out there though, but I don't know what. Like I'm worried about something that isn't even there." Mike says, and he means it. He knows that most of his current nerves have to do with Will, but there's something else, something stirring in him that is worried about something else entirely.

"Well, everything's gonna be fine. We're gonna find Will and then we're gonna all go home and tomorrow will be a new day." Lucas says, clapping Mike on the shoulder and Dustin nods his encouragement from the corner.

"Yeah, you're right." Mike says, giving his friends tight smiles. "Let's go."

It's raining harder than they all expected by the time they finally arrive at Mirkwood about twenty minutes later, none of them wearing quite the right protection, but none of them wanting to turn

back. They came out to find Will and that's what they're going to do.

As they make their way through the woods, the weird feeling that Mike had felt earlier only grows stronger. It starts in his stomach and spreads throughout his entire body and soon he can barely hear himself think. The sounds of Dustin and Lucas bickering sound far off and distant, despite the fact that they're right next to him. Then, he hears a snapping noise in the actual distance, which stops him in his tracks.

Shushing and stopping his friends, he shines the flashlight in his hand in the direction of the noise before turning, nearly jumping out of his skin when there's suddenly a person in front of him. Not just any person, a *girl*.

Holy shit.

Mike's entire body feels like it's on fire as he looks at her. It's hard to tell at first that she's a girl, a short buzzed haircut in place of what's usually long hair, but her soft features give her away and also make Mike's heart feel like it's going to burst out of his chest and he has no idea why.

Immediately, Dustin and Lucas start asking her a million questions, *who are you? have you seen anyone else around here? where did you come from? can you hear me?* But, Mike barely hears them. He hasn't been able to stop looking at her, and it's almost like she feels the same way because her eyes have been on his just as long as his have been on hers. Mike swears that the world could explode around them and he wouldn't even notice.

“Mike? Man, are you alright?” Lucas asks, snapping Mike out of his daze. He tears his eyes away from the girl’s, ignoring the way his skin tingles and his heart immediately longs to look at her again. He doesn’t reply to Lucas with words though, only giving him a small nod.

“Can we get the hell out of this rain? It’s obvious that he’s not out here and I’m completely soaked.” Dustin complains from his other side. Mike has already directed his attention back to the girl and is already starting to think about what they’re going to do with her, it’s not like they can leave her out here.

“Yeah, let’s go. C’mon Mike.” Lucas says, tugging on Mike’s arm, trying to pull him away. Were they crazy? They just wanted to leave her here? In the rain, when all she had on was a t-shirt, she didn’t even have shoes on. He gave them both a look, trying to tell them what he was thinking before taking a couple of hesitant steps towards the girl.

She looked nervous as he approached her, but didn’t step back. That weird feeling was back and it was stronger than before and suddenly it all seemed to click into place. *Was she his soulmate?*

“Do you need any help?” He asked her softly, trying his best to keep his voice as even and calm as possible. He didn’t want to freak her out, even though his heart was beating wildly in his chest and his entire body felt like someone had set fire to it.

The girl didn’t respond at all at first and Mike momentarily wondered if maybe she didn’t hear him, or didn’t understand English, but eventually she gave him a small nod. Wordlessly, Mike smiled, removing his jacket and putting it around her shoulders, he hardly

needed it, she looked like she was going to die of hypothermia if she was out here any longer.

“I’ll take you back to my house and then we’ll figure out what to do from there, okay?” The girl was still looking at him with a wide eyed expression, and had yet to say anything to any of them, but she nodded again, seemingly willing to follow him home. Dustin and Lucas on the other hand were looking at him like he had three heads.

“It’s the right thing to do.” He said to them as he led the girl back up towards the road, where they had left their bikes, not leaving his friends any room to argue with him.

This girl, this girl who might be his *soulmate* , needed help and he was going to give it to her.

Twenty minutes later, they’re back in Mike’s basement, the girl on his couch, with his jacket still around her shoulders, her body still shaking, while the three of them stand in front of her. Mike can tell that she’s nervous by the way she’s looking at them, and Mike almost wishes that Lucas and Dustin weren’t here, that maybe she would be less on edge if it were just the two of them.

He wonders if she’s feeling all the same weird feelings that he is.

As the seconds begin to tick on, Mike’s entire body continues to tingle and he’s anxious to hear the sound of her voice. She still hasn’t said a

word to either of them and part of Mike worries that maybe she isn't able to.

However, beyond all that, Mike's heart seems to tug him towards her. Even though Lucas and Dustin seem to not want anything to do with her, Mike can't bring himself to abandon her. He's only known her for about a half an hour and he already feels such a strong devotion to her, like if he walked away from her now, his heart would be missing a piece.

He swears that this girl is his soulmate and every second that ticks on without knowing for certain feels like an eternity.

Finally, Mike gets a moment away from Lucas and Dustin's nosy glares when he brings her over to the bathroom so she can change into something warmer. He can't help the soft smile that falls upon his face as he helps her, the look of wonder on her face as she looks around his bathroom tugging at his heartstrings in a way he never thought something could.

It makes him sad that she somehow isn't accustomed to all the simple luxuries that he lives with every day of his life, but it just burns a determined fire in him to make sure that someday she'll live with all of these luxuries and more.

When she stops him from closing the door, the small smile that had been on his face morphs into confusion.

"You don't want it closed?" He asks softly, glancing between her and door. There's a moment of hesitation on her part, where she looks at

the space between him and the door before her eyes are on him again.

“No.” The word is soft on her lips and once it hits Mike’s ear, his entire body tingles. The story had said the mark would burn, which had always made Mike think it would hurt, but no the sensation is quite the opposite. He feels like he’s being hugged on every inch of his body, like all of his clothes had just been put in the dryer and he had crawled into clean sheets, like hot chocolate and his mom’s homemade chocolate chip cookies right after coming out of the oven. It was the most wonderful feeling Mike had ever felt.

He managed to stumble through the rest of their conversation, his body tingling when he got to hear her voice once more, before leaving her to get changed. He couldn’t believe he had actually found her.

Before he went back over to Dustin and Lucas, who he knew weren’t going to be impressed with what they had just witnessed, he allowed himself to beam. And even though Will was still missing, he really did believe everything was going to be okay.

He had found his soulmate and somehow, at this moment in time, that was everything.

Author’s Note:

so i know that i'm far from the first person who's written a mike and eleven soulmate au but i hope this was different enough??? i just have always thought the "first words your soulmate says to you mark au" idea was super interesting and it was fun to think of in terms of mileven bc el's first word to him is literally the word no

also i took some liberty on what mike's first words to el were, but the idea of el being in the lab and having the words "do you need any help" tattooed on her wrist hurt me in a special kind of way and i'm kind of tempted to write a part 2 from her pov that would probably be a lot shorter but could still be fun like, let me know if you want that???

anyways, i hope y'all enjoyed this!!! i wanna write more for mike and eleven bc they're my kids and i love them, so this was a fun first step into the mileven fic writing world. let me know what you think, friends and thank you so much for reading!!!